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It's the Devil to Pay for Security

Reviewed by Dorrie Depenport

THE CARE OF DEVILS. By

Sylvia Press. Beacon. \$3.50.

THE CARE OF DEVILS

is the fictional case history of a security investigation. It takes place in Washington, D.C., in the immediate past.

At the center of the action is a congressional committee employee of an intelligence agency. She has weaknesses and prejudices, but she is on the whole a sensitive, intelligent person.

By the end of the novel, Ellen Simba has been brain-

washed, with the memory of an early love affair tarnished, her trust in people temporarily perverted, she is a pathetic figure.

Nonetheless, she has the courage to face her situation, and she will soon learn to combat it. She has come to understand what "guilt by association" means.

If Miss Press, herself a former intelligence officer, is to be considered as a novelist, she has not, thus far, the depth of a first-rate one. All of the characters, apart from Ellen, are sketchily, even impatiently drawn. Their conversation, perhaps by the author's intention, is banality itself.

But Miss Press has the first requirement of a novelist, the courage to write the truth. She has, further, the courage to believe that fear and ugliness are not, cannot be the whole truth.